

Donovan News

Number 24

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... keeping in touch with clients and other friends ...

History Responsibilities

The Autumn '99 *News* spoke of the responsibility of those in positions of authority to pass on their history to their successors. The point made was that a sense of history is necessary to reinforce people's sense of identity and belonging. Another important reason for doing so is because history can be a fragile thing. Historical connections can be hard to re-establish once they are broken, and history can be lost.

The Commonwealth Department of Works no longer exists, but once it employed thousands of Australians throughout the country and was the nation's predominant civil engineering organisation. There were few families in South Australia in the period to the 1960s who did not have someone who worked for the state and commonwealth railways: most South Australians were dependent on the railways in some way. Yet a detailed history of the railways and its influence was never written, and with the abolition of the South Australian Railways it is doubtful that it ever will. Similarly there was never a commission to record the history and influence of the former Bank of Adelaide before it was taken over.

Anniversaries are often used as opportunities to commission corporate and organisational histories. However, history is unpredictable and anniversaries might not always be the occasions for a sense of satisfaction that some CEOs would like. Economic rationalism has caused the demise of many companies and organisations that once touched the lives of many Australians. The Newcastle steelworks has closed recently: the Whyalla steelworks now faces an uncertain future.

There might not be an immediate economic benefit to a company in having its history documented, but these may flow from other benefits. A commissioned history provides an admirable means of recognising contributions to an organisation and celebrating achievements, and in D&A's experience this is appreciated by loyal staff.

IT WAS THERE
A MINUTE AGO..



D&A's Scope of Work

History continues to be made at D&A through commissioned works, ongoing research and other projects.

The history of ACTEW, the Australian Capital Territory's electricity and water corporation, was published in August, followed by the publication of our history of the Australian Barley Board in September.

Research and writing has continued on the history of the De La Salle Brothers in Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. This project is due for publication in late 2000.

D&A continues to provide historical services to South Australia's Attorney-General's Department.

Our work for Dames & Associates concerning the cultural heritage issues identified in the strategic planning study of Murray Bridge will be completed in November.

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New work begun since the previous *News* includes our participation with others in a planning study associated with the idea of 'Parklands 21'. This represents a proposal to designate a second ring of interconnected parklands and open spaces around the Adelaide urban area. Once again, the **D&A** brief is to assess the cultural heritage implications of the recommendations flowing from the study.

More recently we commenced work on a commissioned history of the Baking Division of George Weston Foods, the makers of Tip Top bread.

This time last year the *News* announced Peter Donovan's appointment as Chief Judge for the Long and Triple Jump events for next years Track and Field program for the Olympic Games. He has recently been appointed Jumps Referee for the 2000 Paralympic Games.

HERE IS
THE MUSE...



Going where work takes us

T rue to the dictum of R.H. Tawney that a historian should be prepared to travel, Peter Donovan visited Rome in September to undertake research in the archives of the international headquarters of the De La Salle Brothers. The visit was very productive and enabled him to gain access to material not available in Australia. It also gave him the chance to meet some of his former teachers. The visit was facilitated by Brother Gerard Rummery, currently a member of the Institute's General Council, but formerly the principal of the De La Salle Training College at Castle Hill, NSW, where Peter undertook teacher training during the 1960s. There was also a chance to renew acquaintances with Brother Peter Gilfedder, recently appointed to the Generalate as executive assistant to the Superior General. He taught Peter at St Michael's College, Beverley, SA, in 1957. Peter formally interviewed both Brothers during the course of the visit and gained interesting commentary on the recent history of the Brothers in Australia.

In addition, the research trip provided Peter with the opportunity to reacquaint himself with Rome, the International Centre for Conservation, where he studied architectural conservation in 1980, and Alejandro Alva who was co-ordinator of the course.



Peter Donovan (left) with Brothers Gerard Rummery and Peter Gilfedder



Rome from the terrace roof of the De La Salle Brothers' Generalate. The dome of St Peters is visible immediately to the left of the crane.

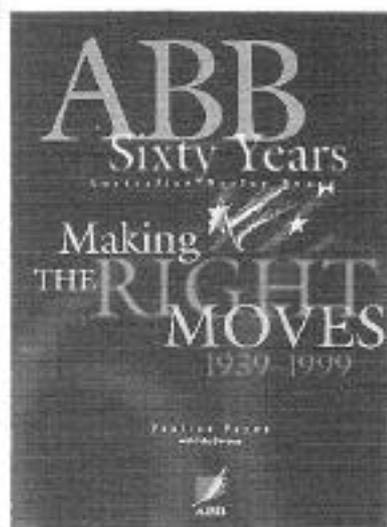
Recently Published

Donovan & Associates has been active on the publishing front in recent months with two new books having been produced.



Lights!...Water!...ACTEW!
A history of ACTEW and its predecessors by Peter Donovan. Published by ACTEW Corporation. The book is hardback, measures 210 mm x 295 mm, has xvi + 320 pages, an index, and is illustrated in colour and black and white.

The Australian Barley Board: Making the Right Moves, 1939-1999 by Pauline Payne with Peter Donovan. Published by ABB Grain Ltd. The book is hardback, measures 210 mm x 295 mm, has xii + 208 pages, an index, and is illustrated in colour and black and white.



The International Centre for Conservation (right), in Rome's Trastevere quarter.

Tip Top

Our commission to record the history of George Weston Foods' Baking Division provides another interesting challenge. Once again, it is a commission that is national in scope. Successful completion of this project will effectively mean we will have written the history of Australia's baking industry.

Australia's baking industry since World War II has undergone rationalisation, leading to the development of two major national baking groups, and the proliferation of small independent hot bread shops — as a direct result. In 1996 D&A documented the development of Goodman Fielder's subsidiary, Quality Bakers Australia, the makers of Buttercup bread. We now look forward to recording the history of the other half of the industry.

MM-NOTHING SMELLS
QUITE LIKE FRESHLY
BAKED HISTORY..



Clio

Clio still works for **Donovan & Associates**. She was a goddess in ancient Greek mythology, the second of nine sisters, known collectively as the Muses.

The Muses were created by Zeus at the request of the victorious gods after their war with the Titans so that their glorious deeds might be commemorated in song. Afterwards the Muses took part as singers in all of the great celebrations of the gods.

Each of the Muses had a particular specialty—Clio's was recording History. Calliope, Clio's elder sister, was noted for writing epic poetry. Her younger sisters were Erato (love poetry), Euterpe (lyric poetry), Melpomene (tragedy), Polyhymnia (sacred song), Terpsichore (choral song and dance), Thalia (comedy and idyllic poetry) and Urania (astronomy).

Clio and her sisters are each identified in sculpture and painting by association with particular symbols. Clio is always depicted holding a scroll or a book. There is a representation of her in the House of Congress in Washington, USA, and there is a statue of her in the Vatican Museum, in Rome.



Copy editing of the *News* is by Bernard O'Neil. The cartoons are by Stephen Stanley.



DONOVAN & ASSOCIATES History & Historic Preservation Consultants

Donovan & Associates is a consulting firm which specialises in matters relating to aspects of historical research, writing and historic conservation. The firm undertakes a wide variety of tasks based upon these specialties. Major projects completed by the firm include large commissioned histories and heritage studies, recording of oral history and providing advice on records management.

Donovan & Associates was established in 1980 and has since undertaken work for clients throughout southeastern Australia on projects that have involved research and work in all parts of the country.

Donovan & Associates' services include:

- Corporate and institutional histories
- Regional and local histories
- Heritage surveys and assessments
- Land tenure research
- Oral history programs
- Advice on cultural tourism
- Advice on historical displays

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